

U.S. Bureau of agricultural economics

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Standing, Theodore G

Cat
AD
Add

8876

ADJUSTMENTS TO WARTIME NEEDS IN THE
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

T.G. Standing, Herbert Pryor, and T. Wilson Longmore ✓

Little Rock, Arkansas
August - 1943

MAY 5 1948

USDA
LIB

ADJUSTMENTS TO WARTIME NEEDS IN THE
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION 1/

July 1943

War has brought about many adjustments in rural life in the South Central Region, principally because of great demands for manpower, food, and raw materials. In response to economic and patriotic incentives, population shifts have disrupted old relationships. This high mobility of the population has not been conducive to stable community life; church, school, and kinship ties have been broken. Farmers were called upon to produce crops they were not accustomed to raising and to increase production of other crops. This was often difficult because custom and habit are hard to break. These and other factors have contributed to a feeling of instability and insecurity.

Rural people suddenly found themselves with sufficient money to satisfy long suppressed desires and at the same time found that they were unable to buy the things they had always wanted. Such a situation was fraught with bafflement. Housewives were constantly faced with the necessity of buying more carefully and planning meals so that maximum nutrients were secured. Families were exhorted to appraise their economic situation and give more and more to various war programs.

Many rural people became interested in the outside world because of relatives on far-flung battlefronts. Neighbors talked with pride about the boys in the Pacific who received promotion and felt deep sorrow at news of death or capture of someone they knew. Guadalcanal and North Africa became common words in local discussion.

War heightened everyday tensions and made people generally more aware of those peacetime norms which conflict with the needs of a nation at war. A reappraisal of all action, attitudes, and programs was demanded by the community in the light of how much they contributed to the winning of the war. Social reforms were side-tracked or given new meaning in terms of military necessity.

Variability in farming and culture is great in the South Central Region and generalizations are difficult. Because of this it is not desirable to consider this analysis as inclusive of the entire Region. The procedure will be to select those adjustments which seem to have general applicability and test them by observation in five sample counties.

Although only a very small part of the Region is represented in the five counties, it is well to point out that Fisher County is in the Rolling Plains, McCulloch County in the Edwards Plateau, Johnson County in the Forested Coastal Plain, Texas Blacklands and Grand Prairie, Latimer County in the Ozark-Ouachita Highlands, and Desha County in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain.

1/ Based chiefly on data from the following five sample counties: Desha County, Arkansas; Latimer County, Oklahoma; Fisher, Johnson, and McCulloch Counties; Texas.

In this report less importance is attached to types of farming or physical factors and more to the cultural and community diversity represented within the five counties. The analysis attempts to indicate the inter-relatedness of wartime adjustments with the general social situation.

The factors that make for diversity are important, and briefly may be summed up for each county as follows:

Fisher County, Texas

1. Mechanization has reached a high degree of development on the farms; perhaps 80 percent of all farms have tractor power.
2. Cotton is the main cash crop but diversification has made great headway, especially along lines of livestock and poultry enterprises.
3. Ranching with emphasis on beef cattle is an important industry.
4. Farm ownership is on the increase and the majority of operators are medium and small size farmers.
5. Class consciousness is lacking or incipient and contributes to high social mobility.
6. Farm population decreased 1,529 between 1930 and 1940, while the nonfarm population increased 898.
7. Cotton is pulled, not picked, by migrant Negro and Mexican workers.

McCulloch County, Texas

1. Many cattle and sheep are raised on large ranches.
2. The majority of farm operators are on medium to small diversified farms. Dairying is on the increase.
3. The county is the turkey center of Texas.
4. Cotton is an important cash crop and is picked by Mexican migrant workers.
5. Farming is highly diversified with a steady year-round farm income.
6. Mechanization and AAA payments have speeded movement of tenants from farms, reduced the number of operators, and increased holdings.
7. Farm population declined 297 from 1930 to 1940, while nonfarm population increased 233.

Johnson County, Texas

1. The metropolitan areas of Dallas and Fort Worth extend into this county.
2. Farming is highly diversified.

MAY 11 1948

3. Mechanization has reached a high degree of development.
4. Farm income comes predominantly from ranching, dairying, and cotton.
5. Railroad shops at Cleburne are an important influence on farm labor.
6. Means of transportation and communication are excellent.
7. The county contains three distinct farming areas.
8. Farm population decreased 1,943 from 1930 to 1940, while nonfarm population remained stationary.

Latimer County, Oklahoma

1. Subsistence farming predominates. Farms are too small (average size slightly over 100 acres) for efficient farming. In 1939, 67 percent of the farms had total products of under \$400 value.
2. A low level of living and low educational status of the population prevails. Many rural settlements are extremely isolated due to rough topography, poor roads, and absence of communication facilities.
3. The population of the county is 100 percent rural.
4. The county has a recent history of lumbering and mining and there is some persistence of these industries on a "marginal" basis.
5. Indian land policy with allotments in small units, and the presence of open range have affected farming practices.
6. "Frontier" culture patterns persist in such practices as primitive housing and farming methods, widespread practice of hunting and fishing, readiness with firearms, and keen interest in local politics, etc.
7. The population is relatively homogeneous (91 percent native white with some 5 percent Indians and smaller percentages of Negroes and foreign-born whites).
8. There is a high degree of mobility of population, particularly with reference to movement to and from the West Coast. (Population decreased 19 percent 1920-1930; increased 11 percent 1930-1940, and has declined some 20 percent since 1940.)
9. Increasing production of livestock, decreasing production of cotton, and some recent increases in size of farm are significant trends.

Desha County, Arkansas

1. A majority of the farm operators are sharecroppers on cotton farms.
2. Less than 10 percent of the farm operators are tenants other than sharecroppers and more than 20 percent are owners.
3. Population increased 25 percent between 1930 and 1940 due mainly to influx of new-ground settlers.
4. Negroes comprise 60 percent of the total population. White population increased 39 percent, Negro 16 percent, from 1930 to 1940.
5. Government programs have had a tremendous effect in the county: FSA helped approximately 230 farm operators become owners and is rehabilitating an additional 500 farm families; and AAA has influenced directly the farming system of over 90 percent of the farm units through quotas, soil conservation payments, crop insurance, parity price payments, and price support programs.
6. Arkansas City, the county seat town, has declined in importance and McGehee has risen in importance from the standpoint of rural families, primarily because the FSA, AAA, and Extension offices are located there.
7. Population of towns in plantation areas is on the increase, but town population is declining in new-ground areas.
8. Levee construction and drainage have made reclamation of large areas of the county possible.
9. The Japanese Relocation Site has had great influence on the local labor market.

Manpower Adjustments

Situation.- There was an estimated net loss of 17,317 in the civilian population of the South Central Region from April 1, 1940 to May 1, 1942. Actually, however, the only State experiencing a net loss was Oklahoma, the decline in this State being 158,120, or 7 percent. Louisiana gained 3 percent, and Arkansas and Texas about 1 percent each.

Workers have migrated to industrial centers in great numbers and the Armed Forces have drawn off many persons, causing a scarcity of manpower in rural areas. The five counties studied are no exceptions to these trends. Estimates based on the registrations for Ration Book No. 2 (March 1, 1943) indicate that the civilian population decreased approximately 3 percent in Desha County between April 1, 1940 and March 1, 1943, 8 percent in both Johnson and McCulloch Counties, 18 percent in Fisher County, and 23 percent in Latimer.

In the short run, migration is the dominant factor in population change in the Region, although number of births and deaths should be considered. Natural increase (excess of births over deaths) approximated 550 between 1940 and 1943 in Desha County, 375 in Latimer County, 525 in Fisher County, 750 in Johnson County, and 450 in McCulloch County. If these figures are added to the net loss in civilian population, an approximation of net migration is arrived at, which is shown in table 1.

Table 1.- Estimated net migration from five sample counties, between April 1, 1940 and March 1, 1943

County	:	Net migration
		Number
Desha County, Arkansas	:	- 1,229
Latimer County, Oklahoma	:	- 3,161
Fisher County, Texas	:	- 2,788
Johnson County, Texas	:	- 3,029
McCulloch County, Texas	:	- 1,441

From these data, it appears that the five counties have had large net decreases in their civilian populations, varying from approximately 1,229 in Desha County to 3,161 in Latimer County. No doubt most of this was due to the exodus of persons to industrial employment, particularly after the 1942 crops were gathered. Desha, Latimer, and McCulloch Counties lost 10 percent or more of their population between May 1942 and March 1943.

This can only mean that available manpower to get out 1943 crops is considerably below what it was a year ago. Employment on farms July 1, 1943 was 4 percent under July 1 a year ago.

Adjustments.- Faced with a dwindling manpower the counties have been forced into various adjustments to make up for the scarcity of labor. Some of these adjustments are discussed below.

1. Farm operators in the South Central Region were working an average of 12.6 hours per day on June 1 this year, or about one hour longer than on the first of June three years ago. No change in the workday of hired labor was noted, averaging 10.3 hours per day.

Although it is generally acknowledged that most farmers have increased their working day, some important variations are to be noted. In Desha County many sharecroppers continue to be underemployed during certain slack seasons and very little can be done apparently to spread out their work year. There are a large number of small owners and tenants in Latimer County who are not fully equipped on their own farms, who are potentially available for part-time work elsewhere. In commenting on the labor situation in Latimer County, a resident of a neighboring county remarked, "Latimer County has more people and less labor than any other place I know of. Lots of men with only 4 or 5 acres of crops claim they are always busy at farming. The trouble is they don't want a full-time job and don't see the need of working all the time." There is a good deal of truth in this statement and it suggests one of the major difficulties in the way of a more efficient utilization of the available labor supply.

2. Recent regulations which have as their purpose the deferment from military service of essential farm workers have aided materially in keeping manpower on the farm. It is estimated that a uniform and liberal application of the war unit standards so as to defer farm workers responsible for 8 or more war

units would result in a reclassification to the deferred status (classes II-C or III-C) of about 346 thousand out of the nearly 462 thousand farm workers in the military age group, or nearly 75 percent of all. Since approximately 50 percent of these farm workers would be rejected for physical or other reasons for military service even if they were not reclassified, the net effect of the Selective Service war unit standard might mean the deferment of 115 thousand farm workers, who in the basence of dependency deferments would otherwise be liable for military service.

The effects of agricultural deferment vary considerably. It has had significantly favorable effect in Desha, McCulloch, and Johnson Counties, with minor significance in Latimer and Fisher. The most liberal interpretation was given by the Desha County Selective Service Board, which granted approximately 85 percent of all applications. Less than 25 percent were granted in Fisher County. No doubt the fact that most of the agricultural workers deferred in Desha County were Negro sharecroppers played a great part in the situation, since little community reaction against widespread deferment of Negroes was to be expected. However, where the population is more homogeneous, as in Fisher County, it is to be expected that the community will exert greater control over all its members. Furthermore, it is to be noted that where family-size farms predominate, as in Latimer and Fisher Counties, either the deferred workers or one of his family usually asks for deferment. In Desha County, 75 or 80 percent of applications for deferment for agricultural workers are presented by the planter.

3. To some extent farmers are shifting from crops with high labor requirements to those with lower labor requirements. On July 1, 1943, acreages in cotton, barley, and corn were slightly under the acreages harvested in 1942, while acreages in wheat, oats, rice, tame hay, wild hay, potatoes, sweetpotatoes, soybeans, peanuts, and sorghums were above 1942 harvested acreages. The crops showing greatest increase were sweetpotatoes (53 percent), Irish potatoes (33 percent), peanuts (30 percent), tame hay (24 percent), soybeans (18 percent), and sorghums (17 percent).

In Desha County where farmers enjoy comparative advantage on long-staple cotton, the acreage is up approximately 5 percent over 1942. Most of the small farms planted the allowable 10 percent above allotment but some large farms and plantations could not increase acreage more than 5 percent because of anticipated labor shortage.

Latimer County has experienced a large decrease in cotton acreage and increases of pasture and livestock. One large farmer who normally has three or four tenants now has only one and the owner has put much of his land into pasture and meadow.

In the three Texas counties shifts from row crops to combine maize and hay are reported. Such changes contemplate the use of more machinery with a minimum of labor. Some 70 percent of the entire maize crop in Fisher County is combine maize this year.

4. On June 1 about 15 percent of the farm workers in the South Central Region were under 14 years of age as compared with 4 percent as of April 1, 1942. This change reflects an upward trend in employment of youngsters on farms due to the stringency of the labor situation. Furthermore, 66 percent of the farm population was working on farms June 1 compared with only 61 percent on June 1 a year ago. The number of elderly people working on farms has increased also.

Children 11 to 16 years old and members of sharecropper families helped harvest the oat crop in Desha County and were paid as day laborers. However, farm children are already accustomed to doing farm work and little change in the use of nonfarm children has been noted in the sample counties. Many old people are continuing to farm or have returned to farming.

A sharp increase in the percentage of females working on farms occurred between April 1, 1942 and June 1, 1942. Not all of this can be accounted for as seasonal variation and it is probable that the percentage of female workers has increased materially since last year.

Practically all of this increased work by women in Latimer County represents contributions of members of the farm family. Some of it represents work not commonly done by women but for the most part it is a case of women doing more of the same type of work with which they have always assisted, such as hoeing, caring for milk cows, poultry, and gardens, and helping with the harvest of various crops.

One Latimer County farm woman reported that her daughter had been helping bale hay (tying the wires around the bales). She herself had been driving a team on the hay rake, besides milking several cows and doing other outdoor work. At the time of the interview she was canning corn in the kitchen and keeping an eye on her husband's cousin who had had a near sunstroke in the hayfield the day before. This woman reported that her husband had been trying to find time to mow the weeds in the pasture before they went to seed. "I've never run a mower myself but it looks like I might have to."

Presumably most of the women now working on farms will assist with the fall harvest as the need arises, but it is not anticipated that any new groups of women will be available.

One woman remarked, "No, I never heard of the 'Women's Land Army', but I reckon all the women around here already belong."

As now planned, women of Desha County will occupy about the same relative position in the labor force that they always have. Most women farm workers, that is, Negroes and small white farmers' wives, have traditionally taken their place beside the man in the field; they will continue to do so, knowing that they are now contributing to the war effort. Wives and children of the larger farmers and the majority of white families in the trades, professions, and higher laboring classes in the cities have not in the past worked in the field, and it is not expected that they will do so now. The feeling expressed is: "This is the South, you know." One informant remarked, "An old hoe gets heavy and your neck gets a crick in it from the pull of the cotton sack. That's 'nigger work'." No new groups of women will be available this fall. It has always been customary to release domestic help at cotton-picking time, and it is assumed this will be done this year.

One qualification should be made to the foregoing statements. Some informants believe that it will be difficult to get some Negro women to pick cotton this year because of other sources of income. Others say fair pay for picking will get them out. It is impossible to estimate how many will be affected by this economic condition.

Considerably more work is being done by the women of McCulloch County than ever before. Women are driving tractors and trucks, baling hay, chopping cotton, and helping in practically all kinds of farm work. There has probably been a 50 percent increase in the amount of farm work done by women. Some informants estimated the increase as much as a hundred percent. The greater part of the work done by women is performed by farm women on their own farms or on the farms on which they are located as tenants or laborers. Some women from the city and villages worked on the farms but they are from the groups that usually do field work each year. The Mexican crews from Brady and Melvin usually include some women workers. Women were doing various kinds of farm work in 1942 but no new types were taken up in 1943 as far as the observer was able to determine.

Although women are doing more farm work on farms in Fisher and Johnson Counties most of them are members of farm families and work on their home farms. There are of course other women from tenant and farm laborer families and families from the lower economic groups in the towns and cities who traditionally work in the fields, but for the most part, they are not new additions to the agricultural field force.

5. Another factor tending to reduce shifts of farm workers to nonfarm occupations is issuance of certain regulations by the War Manpower Commission to control transfers of workers in essential occupations. Although these regulations apply only to wage workers and not to farm operators or unpaid family workers, they are beginning to be felt in their application to agriculture. Certificates of availability are being required for off-farm work by farm people.

Draft deferment of agricultural workers has resulted in some slight shifting of workers from nonagricultural occupations to agriculture, amounting to perhaps 16,000 for the Region.

6. Habits of neighborhood cooperation are fairly well developed among small independent farmers throughout the South Central Region and have undergone no radical change as a result of the war demands. Such patterns of behavior have, however, stood the cooperating families in good stead during the emergency. In areas where neighborhood cooperation has not been customary, little change in the patterns of cooperation is yet to be noted.

For example, in Silvester community in Fisher County, the neighbors have exchanged machinery, implements, and labor as always. There is somewhat more cooperation in transportation for trips to town or attendance at community meetings. Frequently one man will transact business for several of his neighbors when he goes to town. Johnson County had 10 canning centers where women of the various communities met to do their canning. Women who owned pressure cookers shared them with neighbors. Many farmers of Latimer County exchanged labor during the 1943 hay harvest.

Responsibility for dealing with labor shortages has shifted materially from the Federal Government to the local community. This has had a healthy psychological effect even though little actually has been done as yet to alleviate present or anticipated peak-season shortages.

7. In the past years transient Mexican labor has furnished most of the cotton pickers in McCulloch County and farmers are looking to the same source for the coming cotton harvest. The U. S. Employment Service has assured the county leaders that there will be an adequate supply of Mexican cotton-pickers for the county, if the needs are made known in time. Mexican pickers usually work in crews under a leader who makes the contracts and other business arrangements with farmers. The larger farmers with good cotton have the advantage in securing labor since more money can be made in the better cotton and longer jobs available on larger farms.

Medium-sized operators of Fisher County as a rule need one regular hand on a seasonal or year-round basis. The majority have this regular hand at present, but many need extra hoe help. Some additional help is also needed during the grain sorghum harvest, and practically all need cotton-pickers. The labor for hoeing and for the grain harvest is critically short and the cotton-pickers must come from the usual Mexican and Negro migrant crews, if they are to be had. The small operators to a large extent depend on family labor, supplemented at times by local help for a few days at a time. Practically all of the operators in the upper income groups depend on migrant labor for cotton-picking. Local labor has to a great extent supplied the hands for cultivation and grain harvests in the past. This year local labor is not available in sufficient quantity.

Neither Latimer nor Johnson Counties make use of migrant labor to any great extent.

A number of large planters in Desha County are trying to make arrangements to bring in some Mexicans from the lower Valley of Texas. Mexicans have been used by a few planters for a number of years. However, it is reported that to date they have been unable to arrange for any labor from this source. Some will make a trip to San Antonio to recruit if possible. It is customary for each planter to do his own recruiting. One asked his ration board about getting gasoline for transportation and was assured that it could be arranged.

Those planters who have had actual experience with Mexicans say they are good workers and they have been well satisfied with them. They report that Mexicans tend to work best in groups under a Mexican supervisor. The planters like this arrangement. One planter laughingly said they eat up all the available corn, vegetables from the gardens, and meal and fat meat from which they mix up chili con carne.

8. The index of farm wage rates in the South Central Region on July 1, 1943 was up 67 points or about 41 percent over July 1 a year ago. Farm wage rates per month with board averaged \$43.01 and without board \$58.13. Farm wage rates per day with board were \$2.24 on the average, and \$2.70 per day without board.

Wages in Fisher County for hoe help range from \$3 to \$4 per day. There are rumors that as much as \$5 per day has been offered. This is approximately a 100 percent increase over 1942. A 14 year-old boy stated, "I am going to quit my job. I am getting only \$3.50 per day; I know where I can get \$4." It is the general opinion that cotton-pickers will ask a wage of \$2 per hundred this

fall. Last fall the price was \$1 per hundred, which was increased in some instances to \$1.50 at the end of the season. Some of the crew leaders of migrant Mexican labor have been talking about a price of \$3 per hundred. It is the talk of high wages for cotton-picking that to some extent has hastened the application for the location of a war prisoner camp within the area. Wages for cotton harvest will be higher because the cotton must be picked, there is a critical scarcity of labor for the picking, and the laborers can set the price. At \$2 per hundred, it is reported that the best cotton-pickers can make from \$16 to \$20 per day, and average pickers from \$8 to \$10.

The wage for hoe hands in McCulloch County has ranged from \$3 to \$4 per day. This represents an increase of about \$1 per day over 1942 wages. It was difficult to get an estimate of the price that will have to be paid for cotton-picking this fall but the probability is the price will be from 50 percent to 100 percent higher than last year. However, if the war prisoner camp is completed in time for the cotton harvest, it may tend to lower the price for picking. Farmers are looking to two sources for labor to pick cotton; the usual transient Mexican labor and the war prisoners from the new camp that is being constructed near Brady. The U. S. Employment Service has assured local leaders that there will be an adequate supply of Mexican labor available for cotton-picking but no price has been mentioned for the work. The value of war prisoner labor to the farmer for cotton-picking is still an unknown quantity as is the amount and date of its availability. It is reported that the cost of the war prisoner labor to the farmer will be approximately \$1.50 per day of 8 hours; 80 cents to the prisoner and 70 cents for expenses.

Farm wages in Johnson County ranged from \$1.50 to \$2 per day for the cultivating season in 1942 and from \$2.50 to \$3 in 1943. Hay-baling wages have been \$4 per day. Farmers refused to pay more than \$3 per day for hoeing. Informants acquainted with the farming situation were of the opinion that the price of cotton-picking would start at around \$2 per hundred and probably go to \$2.50 during the season. This would be from 75 cents to \$1 per hundred more than was paid in 1942.

The few farmers who hire labor in Latimer County are paying somewhat higher wages than a year ago. Some are paying only \$1.50 per day for teen-age boys (with two meals furnished) but the average is from \$2 to \$2.50 for adult workers. Last year the average was perhaps 50 cents less. Some are paying \$3 or more for hay harvest. Except for the hay and cotton harvest, very little wage labor will be hired for the 1943 harvest. The cotton-picking wage has not been set, but it will probably be somewhat higher than in 1942. As a matter of fact, most of the cotton, as well as the peanuts, will be harvested as usual by family labor.

Wages of day hands in Desha County varied from \$1.50 to \$2.25 during the cotton chopping season just past, with \$2 as the prevailing rate for 10 hours. This is approximately the same as was paid last year. Farmers expect cotton-picking to run around \$2 per hundred or 50 cents above that paid in 1942. However, many felt that it would start at \$1.25 or \$1.50 and go up under the bargaining power of labor and urgency for getting cotton picked. Some farmers expressed a feeling that local bidding for labor may push cotton-picking wages to \$2 or even \$3.

Gin hands get \$2.50 to \$3, railroad workers \$3.20 for 8 hours, sawmill workers \$2, and levee workers \$3. Both farmers and workers feel that picking wages are going to be higher this year than last. Farmers think they will have to pay more to entice the workers out. A number of observers commented upon the change in attitude of Negro women with reference to cotton chopping. It is felt that many of them refused to work cotton this year because they had other sources of income, probably a boy in the Army, or a boy or girl in some defense work. However, others feel that the situation may be different at picking time because they can make good wages picking cotton.

9. Little effort is being put forth in any of the five counties to train new workers. Selective Service Boards have made it clear that all agricultural deferments are temporary. It is emphasized that replacement workers should be trained for the deferred men at the earliest possible time, but little has been done to date.
10. The extent of neglected crops or abandoned acres is difficult to ascertain. It was estimated by competent local observers in Fisher County that there will be a serious deterioration in and loss of crops due to the inability to get hoe help in sufficient numbers and at the proper time. Many local informants estimated that there will be from 30 to 35 percent reduction in feed crops, 15 to 20 percent in cotton, and 10 to 15 percent in peanuts, because of the scarcity of hoe help. This estimate of loss is probably too high, if the weather continues favorable. A 10 to 15 percent all-around reduction is a more probable figure. It is the custom in the county to plow under a crop and replant when it becomes too weedy to produce. This procedure has been repeated several times on many fields in the county this year, and still the necessary hoe help is not available. A farmer using a large tractor outfit will need from 10 to 20 workers for a period of from 2 to 3 weeks to do the hoeing on the 300 or 400 acres cultivated; without sufficient hoe help the grass and weeds in the rows cannot be removed and a loss of crops results. Adequate help for this work has not been and is not now available and a deterioration in crops in many instances is evident. It is now practically past the hoeing season.

There has been some deterioration and loss of crops in Johnson County due to the fact that hoe help was not available when needed, but such loss is relatively small. There is a considerable amount of land not in cultivation that was formerly cultivated, but this is an accumulation of a period of years and is not altogether attributable to the war emergencies.

There is not much idle land in McCulloch County. To some extent farmers adjusted their 1943 farming plans to the machinery, livestock, and labor available. Land formerly in row crops was diverted to grain or hay crops that could be harvested with machinery or pastured by livestock. However, too much land was put in row crops for the supply of labor available for farm work. There was a shortage of hoe help and some of the crops show neglect although the majority are in fair condition. This is due in part to the fact that the dry season has required a minimum of hoeing. There will probably be a 10 to 15 percent loss of crops due to the lack of hoe hands to hoe the crops at the proper time. Some farmers estimate the loss as high as 25 to 30 percent, but the smaller estimate is believed to be a more realistic figure.

From a production standpoint the temporary or permanent abandonment of Latimer County farms is not particularly serious. No accurate figures were available on the total number of farms or crop acres on which crops will not be harvested this year. One informant estimated that 25 percent of the farms are idle. For the most part this land represents the smaller and less productive farms. It is probable that the former operators of these farms will make a greater contribution to the war effort in their present location than would have been the case had they remained in Latimer County.

Crops have been well tended and there are few idle acres in Desha County.

11. Extension's emergency farm labor program consists of the following five phases:

- (a) Conducting an educational program with farmers
- (b) Mobilization and recruitment of intrastate labor
- (c) Organization and management of Victory Farm Volunteers
- (d) Organization and management of a Women's Land Army
- (e) Placement of available persons for farm work.

This has placed major responsibility for solving the farm labor problem upon local communities.

No active program of labor recruitment is being carried on in Latimer County because it is not considered necessary. However, the county agent's office is now considered the "clearing house" for farm labor. The county agent attempts to put prospective employers in touch with men who are available for work. Some 25 or 30 boys from the Wilburton schools were signed up for the Victory Farm Volunteer Corps and a few actually worked a few days during the potato harvest, but aside from this there has been little demand for their services. Farmers are reluctant to hire town youths for most types of farm work. Earlier this spring an attempt was made by the county agent to secure a complete check on all farms in the county who expected to hire labor during the year and all men and boys who would be willing to hire out for farm work. Registration cards for the purpose were prepared and sent to neighborhood leaders with the request that they fill them out for their neighbors. Letters were also sent to all AAA cooperators asking them to report their labor needs. Approximately 100 replies were received. The turnover of population in the county is indicated by the fact that a number of letters (25 or more) were returned unclaimed as the families had moved and left no forwarding address.

These recruitment efforts are not regarded as having been particularly successful and it is felt that unless conditions become more stringent there will be little necessity for such a program to supply the labor needs within the county.

No recruitment programs are under way in either Fisher or Johnson Counties.

Production Adjustments

More land is in cultivation in the South Central Region this year than in 1942. This has been achieved in the face of a dwindling farm labor pool and testifies to the patriotism and morale of farmers generally. Estimates of crop production on July 1, 1943 indicated that production will be above 1942 in all major crops with the exception of wheat, barley, tame hay, alfalfa hay, clover, timothy, and rye.

Although no stringent labor shortage exists in Latimer County the comparative scarcity and high cost of labor in relation to the pre-war period is contributing to some rather significant changes in farming practices. These include a large decrease in cotton acreage and increases of pasture and livestock. Onion acreage in neighboring Pittsburg County is about one-third of that in 1942. Victory gardens have been adversely affected by the dry weather but large quantities of garden produce were canned before the onslaught of the drought. Several families who were visited reported having canned from 150 to 250 quarts apiece, chiefly greens, beans, peas, potatoes, corn, and tomatoes. Several reported that they expected to can additional tomatoes and corn. Some are planning to try to raise fall gardens, but many are discouraged by the dry weather. Latimer County suffered less from spring floods than did many other eastern Oklahoma counties, but there was considerable damage to corn, sorghum, and other crops in the low-lying bottomland. Much of the damaged acreage was replanted, but this has made the crops late and extremely vulnerable to the current drought. In neighboring Pittsburg County from 15 to 20 percent of the corn was destroyed by floods. Only part of this acreage was replanted. Early in July it was estimated that unless rain came very soon there would be less than half a normal corn crop in Latimer and surrounding counties. Livestock producers are consequently more apprehensive than ever about the possibility of a serious feed shortage this winter. There is a disposition to blame "the Government" for the situation, particularly with reference to the scarcity and high cost of protein feeds and recent declines in livestock prices. There is a feeling that both feed and livestock dealers are taking unfair advantage of the situation to the detriment of the farmer. There appears to be considerable variation in the price of commercial livestock feed among different dealers. One man reported paying \$2.85 per sack at one place and \$3.35 at another on the same day and for identical brands.

Latimer County farmers' initial attempts at commercial potato production proved to be a rather unhappy experience. In May potatoes were reported to be selling on the retail market for as high as \$1.25 a peck. Just prior to harvest the price was \$2.70 for a 100-pound sack. Arrangements had been made with a buyer from Texas to purchase the entire Latimer County crop at \$2.35 but just as harvest began the market broke. This made it impossible for the commercial buyer to carry out his informal agreement and it became necessary to appeal to the Food Distribution Administration to provide a market in the emergency. A few potatoes were lost, but the final result was that most of the crop was sold at a net price to the growers of \$1.80 per hundred. The disappointment of the growers was further augmented by some misunderstandings concerning grading, the purchase of sacks, and the proper handling of the crop in the field. Total commercial acreage in the county was small (approximately 200 acres) and the average yield was little more than 40 bushels per acre. The whole episode resulted in a great many "headaches" and a

lot of extra work for the members of the War Board, but now that it is all over, the general inclination of farmers and agency representatives alike is to charge the whole thing up to "experience" and to plan to avoid similar difficulties next year. In spite of the relatively low price received, few farmers actually lost money on the potato deal and several persons expressed the belief that it will be quite possible to increase potato production in 1944.

Prospects for cotton and peanut production in Latimer County are fairly good since the damage to these crops from the dry, hot weather has as yet been relatively slight. Some boll weevil infestation is reported in Latimer and surrounding counties. Peanut acreage in Latimer County is not as large as anticipated in May, but approximates the county goal of 3,000 acres. The hay crop, which is now being harvested, is near normal and the dry weather is favorable for harvest.

Adjustments in production programs to meet conditions of the war period have been made in Johnson County. There has been a shift from row crops to crops such as combine maize and hay that can be handled by machinery with the minimum of extra labor. A reduction in the peanut goals from 22,500 acres to approximately 10,000 acres is more in line with the county facilities for this crop. The acreage planted to cotton is some 10 percent below the quota due to the scarcity of labor and to the unsatisfactory price as compared with the prices of other farm products. There has been a great increase in the number of gardens in the county. There was a scarcity of farming equipment in certain instances, but on the whole the shortage was not critical. There was a somewhat wider use of machinery and equipment on a neighborhood basis but not on an organized county-wide basis. There were several cases where the members of the family, men, women, and children, comprised the hay harvest and hay-baling crew.

The most notable production adjustments in Fisher County are the increases in number and size of home gardens, in the number and size of flocks of poultry, in the number of hogs, beef, and dairy cattle, in the acreage of peanuts, and in the acreage planted to combine maize, which was tried for the first time in 1942. Some 70 percent of the entire 90,000 to 100,000 acres of maize this year is combine maize. With a continuance of a favorable season there will be no shortage of feed for stock or food for people in the area, even though a percentage of crops may be lost due to labor shortage.

Cotton acreage in McCulloch County will approximate the quota for the county. There has been an increase in the grain crops with a great increase in the number of acres planted to combine maize. There is a scarcity of combines for harvesting the maize but with neighborhood teamwork, the crops can be harvested. The peanut goal was reduced to a lower figure than originally planned, and will be reached. There will be a decided increase in all livestock and poultry products, with an adequate supply of feeds except for the proteins such as cotton seed products and other conditioners that have to be purchased. The indications are that the serious shortage of these proteins of the past winter and spring may approach critical scarcity during the coming winter and spring. Livestock is in good condition and much of it will be ready for the markets at the normal time. Victory gardens in McCulloch County have produced much additional food although the dry weather has cut them short of maximum production. To a marked degree the larger and better gardens have been raised by the medium-income and more prosperous groups in the

city, towns, and villages, and by the more prosperous farmers. This same condition exists with regard to the conservation and preservation of produce. The lower economic groups have put forth the least efforts to increase their gardens and their canning. However, on the whole there are indications that there will be adequate supplies of food for people and feed for stock in McCulloch County for the coming year. At the peak of the gardening season there was a surplus of fresh vegetables beyond the needs for current use and home canning, but practically no market for them. The conservation and preservation of food from Victory gardens and other sources will more than double this year, according to the report of informed observers.

Farmers of Desha County lost money on this year's Irish potato crop because the market "went out from under" it. Adding to this bad situation, agricultural agencies were somewhat slow to take corrective measures. Also farmers had not done sufficient planning to harvest the crop in an orderly manner. The only farmer planning was done by the Purchasing and Marketing Association starting on May 29 when a board meeting was called to make arrangements to market through the Arkansas Central Cooperative Association. The county agent and vocational agricultural teachers at Wilson cooperated in this attempt to set up an efficient marketing unit for the entire county. Finally, on June 21, the Purchasing and Marketing Association set up potato markets at McGehee and Watson. Farmers generally lacked enthusiasm for the crop and left many potatoes in the field. The war crop goal on sweetpotatoes has been lowered from 480 acres to 320 acres, while that for grain sorghum has been raised from 300 to 420 acres. An original soybean goal of 10,500 acres will not be reached, falling short by possibly a few thousand acres. Much of this will be hogged off if insufficient labor is available at harvest time.

Since April the estimated cotton acreage in Desha County has been revised downward from 54,000 acres to 52,000 acres. However, this figure is still 5 percent above the 1942 acreage in cotton but 5 percent below the allowable maximum. Most of the small farms planted the allowable 10 percent above their allotment. Large farms increased cotton acreage less than 5 percent because of an anticipated inadequate labor supply. Oats made a good crop and were harvested in an orderly manner because of the favorable season. Cotton was worked well because of the unusually dry season and consequent lack of weeds. The county is short of combines. Some persons say that this is due to the small quota given to John Deere, Allis-Chalmers, and International, which happen to be the only farm machinery dealers in the county. War crops are extremely variable within the county depending upon the extent of the drought. There is an excellent stand of corn but it is being hurt by the drought and it was stated that if rain does not come within the week of July 12-19 the feed crop would be short (perhaps cut in half).

The eastern half of Desha County has been harder hit by drought than the western half. Farmers reflect different attitudes and feelings in response to this variation. Optimism generally prevails from McGehee to Dumas, particularly in the plantation areas. Such a feeling diminishes from west to east, particularly around Rohwer. Gardens are suffering from lack of rain but there are many of them and it is expected that much canning will be done later in the season.

Consumer Adjustments

While Victory gardens in the Region did not come up to expectations on account of the dry weather, most families have made an effort to produce as much home-grown food as possible and to can all available surplus.

Adequate canning equipment seems to have been available to date, although more pressure cookers could have been sold had they been on hand at the right time. A new supply has recently begun to come on the market, but several women expressed the opinion that they were of inferior quality. Many farm women appear to be half-afraid of pressure cookers. Several stories were told of accidents and serious injuries resulting from their use. One housewife stated that she wouldn't take a lot for her pressure cooker, but that she was "scared to death" of it and never left it for a minute while using it.

Care of the family garden is still rather widely regarded as primarily "woman's work" but the attitude is reported to be changing as the men have come to appreciate the importance of a home-grown food supply. Relatively little complaint of the rationing programs was encountered but there appears to be some growing resentment, particularly among the larger farmers and stockmen, of recent marketing controls, shortages of feed and fertilizer, and the price roll-back program. At the time of the survey, near the middle of July, the stock market had broken rather badly. Due to the drying up of pastures and prospective shortages and high prices of commercial stock feed, livestock raisers were facing the prospect of premature sales of their livestock on an unfavorable market.

There is some uncertainty and misunderstanding about recent regulations pertaining to home slaughter and local sale of meat. Complaint persists concerning the "red tape" which must be observed by farmers in selling at retail small surpluses of such products as butter and eggs. For example, one farmer reported that his wife used to make some extra butter and sell two or three pounds every week, but she hasn't done it "since they made all these regulations about permits and ration coupons". Now they feed the extra milk to the calves and hogs.

There is a disposition to blame "the Government" for all such difficulties as those described in the foregoing paragraphs. One small farmer and his wife refused to sign up for the local Victory garden contest because they didn't want to get involved in any more commitments to the Government.

Savings continue to increase and banks have deposits considerably above normal. For instance, a Desha County bank showed assets of \$2,000,000 for the first time in its history dating back to 1917. Some money is being sent into the counties by former residents who are working elsewhere. For example, one case was reported of a young girl, now working on the West Coast, who had recently sent \$350 for deposit in the home town bank because "she didn't trust them banks in California".

On the other hand, one hard-working farm woman spoke with mixed pride and resentment of her 16-year-old boy who had gone to California although his help was badly needed on the home farm: "We didn't want 'J.B.' to go. He'd just finished the eighth grade, but he got restless. He's making good wages, but I know he ain't saving any."

Lately a significant number of farm families in Desha County have experienced difficulty in securing meal, and since this is a food staple in the area, it causes some frustration. Other scarce items include coffee, sugar, and fat meat. Farmers generally have many of their red and blue stamps left over. There is some exchanging of food stamps as well as gasoline ration stamps.

On May 3 the McGehee Association of Commerce in Desha County voted to sponsor a curb market for disposing of farm produce, but the plan was dropped because of inability to secure a suitable location, plus opposition of some local merchants. In retrospect some now feel that it was probably better that no curb market was set up this year because everybody had a Victory garden.

Sales of family living staples are booming and most of the low-income families are noticeably better dressed than before. In general, the level of living of most farm people has risen. This is to be observed in their dress, home furnishings, workstock and tools, institutional life, and changes in attitudes (from subservience to independence).

A few families are finding difficulty in canning all the food they would like on 10 pounds of sugar per person. Many of the small farmers are sharing pressure cookers with their neighbors but still there is great demand for cookers.

For some reason, not quite clear, all segments of the population are less vocal with complaints and criticism now than in April. There is little criticism of OPA, bureaucracy, labor, government, and many other things. Perhaps the lull is due to a relaxing of the political front with adjournment of Congress or a relaxing of political intensity following the attainment of certain objectives, particularly the reassertion of Congressional prerogative and so-called "states' rights". At any rate there is less tendency than formerly to argue points such as farm labor shortage, OPA, price control, higher prices, farm machinery, etc.

According to some informants in the sample counties "people are spending lots of money and would spend more if goods and labor were available to do the things they would like to do." There is a definite movement toward the improvement of homes and the general raising of the level of living on the part of all. For the lower income groups, the improvement in the level of living is largely limited to the buying of more and better food and clothing, but for many of those in other economic groups there is an urge to seek standards in some cases approaching the luxury level. In the main, while more money is being spent by practically all classes, the people are using good judgment in their expenditures.

The McCulloch County FSA county supervisor stated that they had difficulty with some of their Tenant Purchase clients. "A few, not many, are eager to use the extra cash income for home and farm improvement beyond the point of business safety. We try to convince them that the wise thing to do at the present time is to make advance payments on their indebtedness so that they may have a backlog against the years when the farming situation may not be so good. The majority of our clients are doing this but there are some who would like to do some luxury spending." The above statement approximates the situation in the county as a whole as far as the spending attitudes of the people are concerned. With goods available for purchase and the restrictions on buying removed, there would probably be a great increase in spending.

There is increased attention to nutritional and welfare problems throughout the Region. The programs for the production, conservation, and preservation of foods for home use are being given more consideration all over the section. For example, in McCulloch County there are five regular canning centers with two additional centers which are canning for the school lunchrooms only. These are to a large extent under the supervision of the Home Economics teachers or of competent local farm women. Some 30 demonstrations of food conservation and preservation methods have been held over the county under the auspices of the Home Demonstration Agent in some instances with the assistance of the FSA Home Supervisor.

The supply of pressure cookers in Fisher County is fairly adequate. There have been some 20 applications for cookers while some 15 have been available. People are beginning to share their cookers with neighbors and there was little evidence of loss of produce due to lack of equipment. One informant stated that "A half-dozen or so of our neighbors do their canning at our house". According to reports from technicians interested in the canning work, there are relatively few of the lower economic groups attending the canning centers, but many women from the higher economic groups are attending consistently. At one canning center visited, where five women were canning, the wife of a wage-earner and a sharecropper's wife were members of the group. The landlords are helping and encouraging the members of the lower income groups in the county to produce and preserve food for the year. There are three canning centers in the county conducted and supervised by the teachers of Home Economics, with advice if and when needed from the County Home Demonstration Agent. These centers are affording opportunities to various groups of homemakers to town, village, and farm, to provide food for their families. At the Rotan center (the other two centers have just opened for work) the women have been canning at the approximate rate of 100 cans per day. Groups from two financial brackets are using the facilities more consistently than other groups: Women from the upper financial brackets in Rotan, who have not made it a custom to preserve food and who have no home equipment for that purpose are consistently working at the canning center; and women from the lower financial groups of both town and country who have no canning equipment also work at the center, often side by side with their neighbors of more fortunate economic standing. In the majority of cases, the middle class of farm and town people, who have been accustomed to preserving food each year and have their own equipment, can their food at home as has been their habit, and rarely appear at the canning center, except to help others with the program. The earnestness with which the women from the two extremes of the economic scale are working together on the common problem of preserving food is a significant commentary on the importance attached to the food conservation problem in the community, which seems to be typical of the county as a whole.

The Fisher County Home Demonstration Agent is at work on a county-wide food conservation and preservation program. A canning center is maintained and used when needed at the REA kitchen at the county seat, where groups of women are assisted in their canning operations. The kitchen is fully equipped with electrical appliances, and the only charge made for its use is the cost of the current used. In an effort to reach all sections of the county, 44 one-day schools are being held to teach and demonstrate the best and latest methods of canning and preservation of foods. It is reported that attendance at these schools ranges from 6 to 20 women.

Programs relating to conservation and preservation of food were being carried on at 10 canning centers in McCulloch County. In addition to the work at the centers, canning activities were being conducted in homes all over the county. Women who owned pressure cookers were providing canning facilities for those without cookers. One member of a demonstration club had canned for 12 different families; she had processed 1,126 containers, and 19 different varieties of food.

War Participation

The majority of farmers in the sample counties give loyal support to the various Government control programs as far as local operation is concerned, but there is some irritation over the fact, as it appears to the farmer, that various planning authorities on the national level have persistently underestimated the importance of the farmers' problems of adjustment to meet wartime production goals. In support of their thesis, they point to the imminent loss of crops from lack of farm labor, due, in their judgment, to the wavering and uncertain policies of the War Manpower Commission; the drafting of key farm workers for the Armed Forces by the Selective Service Boards; to the unequal price ceilings established by OPA, which often tend to hinder rather than increase production; and to the rationing programs which in some instances have allotted machinery and equipment seemingly without knowledge of or consideration for the local farming needs. There is also a small but influential group whose members look with misgivings on all forms of Government control.

There are 725 men from Fisher County in the Armed Forces, 465 of whom are draftees. There is considerable criticism of the Selective Service Board over the fact that many key farm workers have been drafted; many claim that the drafting of farm labor is one of the major causes of the present farm labor crisis, and that the Board should have given more careful consideration to the needs of the farm for trained workers. It is claimed that the food production front is of supreme importance in the war effort. The fact that Fisher County is strictly a rural county and that any quota filled for the Armed Forces must come in large measure from the farms complicates the situation. The determination of the Selective Service Board to fill the county quotas and to play no favorites has perhaps led in some instances to a failure to discriminate between the really "essential" farmers and others who could easily be replaced. As an illustration of this situation, the case of the vocational teacher is referred to repeatedly. This man has been in his present situation for seven years, and brings expert guidance and assistance to a hundred or so farm families in this and adjoining counties. He is classified as I-A and is awaiting his call. It will be impossible to replace him, and his going will be a real loss to the farming interests of the county. This is reported as a more or less typical case. The Selective Service Board is faced with a serious situation, and with the progress of the war and the increasing drain on farm labor, the problem is becoming intensified.

The attitude of the McCulloch County farmers toward Government crop and other control efforts is quite different from the attitude toward other war programs. There is growing opposition to and criticism of the Government controls on agriculture which approaches bitterness in some cases. The changes made in the crop control programs by the authorities at Washington during the crop season is the source of much criticism and the cause of much unrest among the farmers. They maintain that

these changes came so quickly that there was no time to adjust to them. There is a feeling that there are too many semi-independent agricultural agencies and that a better coordination of effort would result in better service to the farmers. Certain price controls are criticized on the basis that equitable price relations have not been established between various products that affect the farmer. It is claimed that the prices set for feed, livestock, and food products from livestock show no understanding of the problems involved and the conclusion frequently arrived at is that all controls should be removed from farm operations. The rationing of farm machinery and implements is also criticized. However, the situation in the county is fairly satisfactory from the standpoint of farm equipment as there is a reasonably adequate supply except in the case of combines for the combine maize.

The Desha County Second War Loan Drive is illustrative of how the Second War Loan went over in the Region. It began on April 7 with a county-wide meeting at McGehee and over \$200,000 was subscribed by May 1, the quota being \$176,000. Ninety-seven percent was purchased through banks and only 3 percent through post offices. This indicates to some extent the small base upon which the bond sales rest. Most of the bonds were either sold to individuals in large denominations or else were bought by banks having large amounts of uninvested funds. The Red Cross War Fund Drive in March surpassed its quota of \$1,600 by \$200. A total of 1,127 subscriptions were made, or an average subscription of \$1.60. Seventy-two percent of the subscriptions were for \$1 or less, 10 percent over \$1 but less than \$5, 9 percent for \$5. Only 35 Negro subscribers were acknowledged. Since the Red Cross drive is perhaps the most general money drive, it is particularly significant. There are roughly 6,000 families in Desha County, of whom approximately 1 in 5 contributed to the Red Cross in March 1943. This represents about 7 cents per capita for the total population. Taking only the white population, it would appear that approximately half the families subscribed to the Red Cross, contributing an average of 16 cents per capita of the white population.

Latimer County residents are keenly interested in the war and in general seem to approve of the way in which it is being conducted. Some of the residents are not too well informed on the most recent developments, and for many the feeling of personal identification with the war effort is not very strong. This applies particularly to residents of some of the more isolated areas where mail is received very infrequently (perhaps every week or two) and life goes on much as it did before. Yet even in such situations, one is frequently surprised by the amount of interest and information displayed concerning developments, both on the home front and the battle front. However, participation in the various financial drives and other civilian war programs is still limited in the main to the residents of the towns and a relatively few well-to-do farmers. War bond sales in the county for June amounted to a total of some \$70,000, of which \$56,675 worth were sold by the Wilburton Bank, \$13,687 by the Wilburton Post Office, and \$425 by the Red Oak Bank. This total was more than six times the assigned quota but the latter was considerably reduced for Latimer and other eastern Oklahoma counties out of consideration for losses sustained through flood damage. Total sales for May were under \$10,000, which amount was considerably less than the assigned quota.

Late in June the Latimer County Civilian War Council was reorganized in an attempt to develop a more active program and to secure wider participation of individuals and organizations in the various civilian war programs. A full slate of committees and block leaders for the towns has been appointed and considerable interest appears to have been developed.

Community and Institutional Adjustments and Attitudes

Latimer County

Six schools in Latimer County are now holding summer sessions in order to permit the children to help with the fall harvest. There were only four holding such sessions in 1942.

Outside the towns there is some evidence that the loss of young people to war industries and the Armed Forces, coupled with the necessity for harder work and longer hours for those who are left, have tended to reduce informal recreational activities and attendance at church and other public meetings. On the other hand, there is probably somewhat more exchange of labor and machinery and increased cooperation in transportation and marketing activities. Many farmers are exchanging labor in the current hay harvest.

The various communities of Latimer County are normally highly independent and self-contained and on the whole the war has probably tended to strengthen these tendencies. At the same time the residents have been made more conscious of events that are occurring in remote parts of the world.

One of the town churches in Wilburton has recently been holding a series of revival meetings with a special evangelist brought in for the purpose. Another has been sponsoring a "community song service" which is open to everyone and which is reported to be well-attended and much enjoyed. Meetings are held at eight o'clock on Sunday evenings.

Two youths were recently arrested for breaking up a revival meeting at one of the county churches. This may suggest a need for organized recreational facilities which are almost totally lacking in the county. Hunting and fishing are widely practiced although a shortage of ammunition has reduced the amount of the former. The chief recreational center in the county is provided by a lake with camping, bathing, boating, and fishing facilities in Wildcat Den State Park, a few miles northwest of Wilburton. This is a very attractive place and prior to gasoline rationing, drew many patrons from a wide surrounding area. Some 5,000 persons are said to have visited the lake on the Fourth of July this year. Boy Scouts of the State hold an annual summer camp at the park, but attendance this year is said to have been much smaller than usual.

Desha County

The war is becoming increasingly real to the people of Desha County. Almost every family is proud of the fact that it has at least one boy or girl in the Armed Forces. One of the most interesting window displays to the citizens of McGehee is the Arkansas Power and Light Company's display of pictures of native sons and daughters in the various services. Very few persons pass the store windows without stopping to look and discuss various individuals.

Some tensions are evident in the towns of the county caused by the inability of white families to secure Negro help. Out of such a situation attitudes are developing which may have a significant effect upon community solidarity and the customary way of doing things. Up to the present time the white population has adjusted to the situation by allowing more choice of work to the worker, increased wages, more consideration as to hours worked, and more leniency toward infractions of previously well-defined norms. Just how far this accommodation process will go is hard to say but there is some evidence that it cannot go much further without some overt efforts to enforce more "desirable" relationships.

A trend which set in about 1940 toward increased cooperative effort in the community has apparently leveled off. Cooperative use of combines, rakes, mowers, balers, syrup mills, tractors, disks, and sowing services is confined to those communities in which there are considerable numbers of small, independent farm families. However, it must be pointed out that where large plantations are operated the type of farm management makes for economical use of machinery, comparable to the cooperative effort among family-size farmers. Community life for the majority of families goes on much as it did before the war. The economic communities are identical for both whites and Negroes but the white social community is wide and inclusive while the Negro is confined more narrowly within the neighborhood for his social contacts. Little evidence can be found to indicate that the community is changing significantly for either whites or Negroes. Gasoline rationing apparently does not prevent the white farmers from getting to town, and as for the Negroes, they still flock to town on Saturday in their work wagons and on foot.

A significant institutional change may be in the offing. A number of planters reported that most of their sharecroppers are waiting to get this crop picked and ginned so that they can buy their own tools and workstock and go to farming for themselves. Many will be asking for a tenant lease next year if this year's harvest proves bountiful. On the other hand, planters say they are going to be looking for more sharecroppers. It is reported that a number of croppers were able to buy farms last year and many more are expected to do so this year.

A few informants observed that more Negroes are now taking out licenses to marry as a result of social security and dependency requirements, and generally improved income.

McCulloch County

There is some indication of a revival of neighborhoods and small towns in McCulloch County. Prior to the war towns and neighborhoods had been definitely on the decline for a decade or two due to decrease in the rural population, changes in tenure status, and increased use of automobiles. The chief expression of attitudes toward business and industry usually took the form of criticism of the methods used by the distributors of protein feeds. Farmers and livestock men are of the opinion that something more than a shortage of proteins is responsible for the difficulty in securing livestock feed. They do not criticize labor for seeking good wages but are inclined to resent the fact that industry is able to pay higher wages than the farmers are able to pay. There is almost universal condemnation of strikes during the war emergency.

Fisher County

Some of the local leaders in Fisher County insist that there is a tendency toward the revival of the small neighborhood as a result of restrictions of movement due to war conditions and the fact that neighbors have to work together and depend upon each other more than has been the case in recent decades. Some of the residents in the neighborhoods support this view, while others claim that there is little change. They say, "We have always been pretty good neighbors out here." The weight of evidence supports the view that there is a slight revival of the neighborhood and some increase of trade for the small town and the crossroads store. There is some skepticism among the farmers as to the sincerity of big business in the war effort or at any other time. In private conversation statements are made such as: "The packers are responsible for the meat situation"; "I think the cotton oil mills were responsible for the feed shortage last winter. There was plenty of cotton seed, but the seed men wanted to force the removal of acreage control of the cotton crop"; "The price of bought feed is too high; the price of hogs too low; big business wins and we lose on both counts". These statements are made usually without rancor and sometimes with a smile, but they represent a distrust of "big business" which is somewhat deeply ingrained. When questions are raised relating to organized labor and strikes the reactions tend to be immediate and highly emotional. It is the consensus that industry, particularly war industry, pays too high wages for too few hours. In fact, the high wage paid by industry is considered one of the major causes of the farmer's labor shortage. They say, "We don't blame the farm worker for seeking a job at high wages, but industry oughtn't to pay so much. The farmer can't feed the world and compete with such wages." There is a rather general feeling that strikes should not be permitted in war times, and a resentment is expressed toward workers "who strike in a time like this". Many favor drastic Federal legislation to outlaw strikes.

Johnson County

Johnson County, located within the metropolitan area of Dallas and Fort Worth, has experienced marked changes in rural life conditions during recent years and there is divided opinion as to whether these changes will lead to improvement, or to the further disintegration of the rural life situation. For a number of years there has been a rather steady out-migration from the rural areas of the county, which has been accelerated during the war emergency. The farms have not only suffered from this loss of labor but there has been an increase in the number of farmers who live on the farms and work in industries at Cleburne, Dallas, and Fort Worth. The institutions and organizations of the rural areas as well as the farming activities have suffered as a result of the various changes. The rural churches have declined. A rural merchant stated, "The rural churches have about passed away. The country people come to the village church." The consolidation of the rural schools tended to center attention away from the local neighborhood, and, coupled with the improvement of transportation facilities, increased the importance of the larger community centers. One of the older citizens of one community stated, "I have noticed the decline of the small neighborhood. Our country church, school, and store have gone to the village and some of us have been spending too much time there. I believe the war has changed things a little. Neighbors are beginning to depend on each other a bit more since the emergency and this newly aroused attitude may lead to the revival of the small neighborhoods. I understand that the cross-road stores, where they still exist, are doing a better business since the rationing programs began."